



plain pocketbook

Lampsilis cardium

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Mollusca
Class: Bivalvia

Features

The plain pocketbook mussel has a thin, round to square shell. The anterior end is rounded. The posterior end is pointed in males and squared in females. The shell is smooth, yellow or tan, and may or may not have green rays. The inside of the shell is white, bluish-white, or pinkish. The plain pocketbook grows to seven inches long.

Natural History

The plain pocketbook lives in the mud, sand, or gravel bottom of creeks and rivers. Freshwater mussel distribution in Iowa is not well documented. They have an elaborate reproductive system. During spawning, males release sperm into the water. The sperm are drawn inside the female's shell, where they fertilize eggs in her body. The fertilized eggs develop into larvae (glochidia) and are stored for a time in the female's gills. When the glochidia mature, the female generally expels them into the water where they must attach as parasites to the gills or fins of fish. Larvae remain on the host fish for a period of weeks or months. Young mussels then detach from their host and drop to the bottom of the body of water. Mussels

are filter-feeders, bringing in water and the organic matter it contains through the incurrent siphon, filtering the particles out, then sending the rest of the water away from the body through the excurrent siphon. Particles filtered include plankton and detritus. Mature mussels spend most of their lives, which range from 10 to 100 years, partially or wholly buried in the bottom substrate.

Habitats

interior rivers and streams; Mississippi River

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

northeastern two-thirds of Iowa; Mississippi River

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001. *Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.